

# RECITALS AND REMINISCENCES

Stories Eminently Worth Telling of Experiences and Adventures in the Great National Struggle.

## THE EXPERIENCES OF AN "ASSISTANT QUARTERMASTER."

Sherman's Banner Had Far From a Pic-Nic on Their Long March.

Editor National Tribune: The different experiences of the boys puts me in a reminiscent mood and with your kind permission I will give you a little of my experience as Assistant Quartermaster "while we were marching thru Georgia."

You know it is an axiom of war that an army lives off the country thru which it travels, and it was depending upon this truth that Gen. Sherman started on his famous march. As the Quartermasters were not able to provide all the necessary food and forage, they were obliged to have help, and a detail consisting of two men from each company was formed to assist him. Some called us foragers, but that was a misnomer; we were Assistant Quartermasters. I was one of this detail, and as I did not belong to a "critter" company my first day's work was barren of results, being obliged to travel on "shanks mare." On the second morning I was fortunate enough to find an old mule grazing peacefully by the wayside, which I surrounded and captured with my bloodhounds. With the aid of an old piece of rope and a leather strap, I managed to fasten a bridle and I christened him "Dammyou," as that seemed to be the name of every mule in the army, or at least a part of the name. He would hardly have been called a first-rate roadster, but it beat walking, and I was fairly successful the second day. The two "Assistant Quartermasters" from the same company seldom went together, so that if one failed the other possibly might be successful; but we generally went in squads, so that if attacked by bushwhackers we would be in sufficient force to defend ourselves and our supplies, if we had any. We had some exciting experiences and made some ghastly discoveries. We often saw pieces of clothing scattered along the roads, and once we came upon a man hanging by the side of the road in an entirely nude condition. They had cut off a sapling about 20 feet from the ground and then split the top end with a wedge which they drove down until the opening was large enough to admit of their victim's head. This they tied in the opening and as the weight of the body was too great to allow the sapling to fly back it left the poor fellow dangling by the road with slits cut in his back extending from the edge of his hair to his heels. On the small of the back was a card bearing this inscription: "Foragers' due bill." I think this was the most terrible thing we discovered. From the day I picked up my mule it had been my desire to get a better mount, as all the boys had good horses, and it was only thru his goodness of heart that John Looney, my partner, stayed with me and tried to help me, and I will state right here that I now regard him as not only my protector and benefactor, but my savior, as we shall see. One Sunday morning Looney and I got an early start, and he proposed to me that we should spend the first part of the morning in looking for the long-sought horse. We had only gone a few miles when we discovered at the bottom of the slope a log cabin and a small log stable with a frame addition. I directed old "Dammyou" to the latter, while Looney rode up towards the house to see how "they all" were getting on.

Upon reaching the stable I peeped thru the cracks and to my joy and delight discovered that upon which my heart had long been set—a dandy looking horse. On entering I also found a whip, saddle and bridle—just what I wanted and needed in my business. While I was trying to capture the refractory reb, who insisted upon presenting the wrong end to me, I heard someone speak outside, but supposing it was Looney, who had joined me just before I attempted to saddle the horse, I paid no attention, but went on with my attempt.



"I SURROUNDED AND CAPTURED HIM WITHOUT BLOODSHED."

tempts to make the stallion change front to the rear. Finally hearing several voices I peeped out and beheld five full-fledged bushwhackers. One held Looney's horse by the head, another had my old mule and a third had his hand thru a hole in the door of the stable made to hook the door from the inside. My first impulse was to break his arm with the loaded end of the whip, but I imagined myself as dangling from the top of a tree and refrained. In looking around I saw that a part of a log had been cut out in order to poke my hay into the manger and I was immediately seized with an uncontrollable longing to investigate that hole. I had not gone far, however, before Mr. Reb had me by the foot, and in language far more forceful than elegant invited me to descend. I first thought that I had a kick coming, and would see how hard I could enforce it right in his mouth, but the remembrance of that horrible "due bill" flashed thru my mind, and I concluded I had better humor him and come down. He escorted me out and while two of his

gang held me went thru my pockets, taking my knife, comb, tobacco and purse. I was then ordered to sit down on a stump and take off my shoes, as he conveyed the consoling intelligence to me that I would not need them much longer. Looney refused to do as they told him and upbraided me for doing so, but I was as biddable as a child and let him take my shoes while I put on his old stogy boots for all mounted. I on my old standby, leaving the horse where I found him, and avoiding the public road cut across pastures and plantations for I don't know how long. Soon after leaving the stable two of our escorts left us, so we then had but three. After a while we came to a creek, and stopped to let the horses drink. As the road was full of fresh tracks the rebels fell to discussing the probability of "they all" having moved camp, and the one who seemed to be the boss finally decided to go over to a house nearby and ask the folks. Leaving instructions for us to follow after he did not return. I was entirely played out, for my blanket had been taken from me and I was riding old "Dammyou" bareback, and I was not set on softer things, but never harder, and you can imagine how I felt after our forced march of three hours. I got off to rest, and my escort did the same, while the rebels exploded he differs with them. That night a man got a little unruly and went outside of the road that led to the fort, and stepping on a torpedoe it exploded, blowing off his heel and part of his hand. Comrade Huffine knows that the ground the 20th charged over was lined with torpedoes, for he says: "When we got up close to the fort we saw the wires above ground, and the boys sang out, 'Watch out!' One exploded at the head of my company, blowing off the leg of Comrade Hiram Rooney, Orderly Sergeant. He was only a few feet from me when the explosion came and my eyes were full of sand. When I could get the sand out of my eyes, I looked and saw the boys on the top of the fort shooting down into it. He ran and jumped down inside the fort and got 40 or 50 pounds of flour, and his bunkie, Lewis Hoffman, got a smoked ham, and they had the best supper that night they had in many a long day. He ran and jumped down inside the fort and got 40 or 50 pounds of flour, and his bunkie, Lewis Hoffman, got a smoked ham, and they had the best supper that night they had in many a long day. He ran and jumped down inside the fort and got 40 or 50 pounds of flour, and his bunkie, Lewis Hoffman, got a smoked ham, and they had the best supper that night they had in many a long day.

chap what command the State meritorious has a big plantation just ahead. He don't live there nor never did, but his wife's folks does or did, but it is likely as you will find any of 'em there now. I can't say for sure, but if you want grub you'll find plenty of it." "Say," said Looney, "we want no risk, remember." He assured us there would be none, and we found the place and got a four-mule load of grub and two or three loads of contrabands, who were willing to go "wherever you all want to carry us." If John Looney, of Co. C, should see this, I wish he would write to me and tell me how he and his are getting along in this world. I consider The National Tribune our best and only speedy source of finding our old comrades. Long life to it and all its readers.—Lem Ross, Co. K, 53d Ind. Halfblood, Mo.

## Torpedoes at Fort McAllister.

L. C. Huffine, Co. E, 30th Ohio, Oakwood, O., does not want to find fault with Comrade Weekley, but when he says the fort was charged with torpedoes he is right, and he differs with them. That night a man got a little unruly and went outside of the road that led to the fort, and stepping on a torpedoe it exploded, blowing off his heel and part of his hand. Comrade Huffine knows that the ground the 20th charged over was lined with torpedoes, for he says: "When we got up close to the fort we saw the wires above ground, and the boys sang out, 'Watch out!' One exploded at the head of my company, blowing off the leg of Comrade Hiram Rooney, Orderly Sergeant. He was only a few feet from me when the explosion came and my eyes were full of sand. When I could get the sand out of my eyes, I looked and saw the boys on the top of the fort shooting down into it. He ran and jumped down inside the fort and got 40 or 50 pounds of flour, and his bunkie, Lewis Hoffman, got a smoked ham, and they had the best supper that night they had in many a long day. He ran and jumped down inside the fort and got 40 or 50 pounds of flour, and his bunkie, Lewis Hoffman, got a smoked ham, and they had the best supper that night they had in many a long day.

## Gen. Rosecrans.

Editor National Tribune: Wm. Duncan, of Yoder, Colo., in a recent issue of The National Tribune says, speaking of Gen. Rosecrans: "Don't rub it into Gen. Rosecrans so hard. He is dead, but he is not dead yet. So far he is all right, but when Comrade Duncan goes on to say that Rosecrans had more love of country than all of them, meaning Grant, Halleck and Stanton, he simply states what he must know to be incorrect, and what the great mass of living ex-soldiers would call so. When he further says that 'even Grant was not above trying to steal the credit of having planned the opening of the cracker line' from Rosecrans, he is away off. It is unworthy of any soldier who served under either of those Generals. He says it was Rosecrans' plan, who was the only General with brains enough to think it out or patriotic enough to turn it over to his successor. I served under Gen. Rosecrans in western Virginia during the first year of the civil war, and am willing to give him great credit as a soldier and patriot, but am not willing to read such stuff as above quoted without a word of rebuke. Gen. Grant, the greatest soldier or ancient or modern times, never took credit to himself for anything he did, but was always ready to give credit when and where it was due. Most brave and unassuming he performed the great work assigned him and never failed in doing it. Any man who would attempt to take any laurels from the fame of the great soldier, Gen. U. S. Grant, is lacking in both sense and gratitude. Grant at Fort Donelson, Grant at Shiloh, Grant at Vicksburg, Grant at Chattanooga, Grant in the Wilderness, Grant at Appomattox, all proved him to be one of the greatest and most successful commanders in the world's history, as well as the most modest and humane in the hour of victory.—J. W. A. Gillespie, 75th Ohio, Middletown, O.

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## FIRST UNION TROOPS IN COLUMBIA, S. C.

The 13th Iowa and Its Regimental Flag. The Burning of the City.

Editor National Tribune: In a recent issue of The National Tribune was a short article by that good old vet, S. J. Phillips, Co. H, 97th Ind., who laid claim to the honor of his regiment being the first Union troops to enter Columbia, etc. Now, here is my recollection of the burning and burning of Columbia. Gen. John A. Logan, Commander of the Army of the Tennessee, rode up to our line, where either the 9th Ohio battery or the 1st Minn. were shelling the State House from the bluff on the opposite side of the river, and asked Col. Kennedy, commanding the 13th Iowa, if he had any men who would cross the river in the face of 15,000 Johnnies. Col. Kennedy called the regiment in line and asked for two companies who were willing to risk the crossing. Cos. G and H, consisting of about 60 men, stepped to the front and offered their services. Leaving behind everything except guns, accoutrements and plenty of shells, they descended the hillside to the bank of the river. Having procured a barge they crossed the river in two detachments, and landed below the city near an old mill. They formed below the brow of the bluff and marched up into the city. When they reached the State House, the rebel flag was flying and the Johnnies were firing from three squares away. If the men of Comrade Phillips' regiment were the first Union troops in the city, why did they not take down the rebel flag? Comrade Maul, of Co. H, 13th Iowa, rushed into the State House, seized the Old Glory which the rebels had put away, hauled down the stars and bars, and ran up the Stars and Stripes. As well as the regimental colors of the 13th Iowa. In the evening when the Fifteenth Corps boys came in they took our colors, marched thru the city with them, and returned them to us when they got tired of them. Now, as to the burning of the city, where the fire started, and who started it. According to my recollection the river flows nearly in an easterly direction, and the city is on the north of the river. The night of the burning the wind blew quite strong from the southeast, and it was in that direction, with reference to the city, that the Johnnies fired the bridge which crossed the river together with some Government supplies. The Camden road, of which Comrade Phillips speaks, leads to the northeast from Columbia to Camden. From about 11 o'clock to 2 a. m. we of the 13th Iowa had to skip around lively to keep from being burned. The old State House basement was used as an arsenal, and was full of shells. When the fire reached that place there was something doing, you better believe. Some of the poor boys started to leave the place, but I guess they went to the arms of Abraham, for I never heard of their return. This is just as I remember, but as I was only 17 years old at the time, I may have been so badly scared that it affected my memory. My best wishes to all comrades, no matter of what color.—S. W. Fraley, Co. H, 13th Iowa, Crawfordville, Ind.

## Providence Spring.

Editor National Tribune: A portion of Comrade Geo. Holland's article, published some time ago in The National Tribune, interested me very much, since it brought fresh to memory circumstances which came under my own observation. In speaking of Andersonville Prison he is correct as to the date of the great thunder storm and rain which occurred on Tuesday, Aug. 9, 1864, which washed the blockade down where the stream entered and passed

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out of the prison. I, with a number of other prisoners, had just arrived at the prison, and we were still on the outside while the rebel Sergeant was taking down our names. This fearful thunder storm came, and well do I remember how excited the Johnnies became, fearing the prisoners would escape while the blockade was down. I was surprised when Comrade Holland said he did not hear of the spring until years afterwards, yet he had walked over the ground where it existed, for it did exist during part of August and all of September, 1864, to my certain knowledge. I cannot now give the exact date, but am safe in saying it appeared some time between the 9th and 20th of August. People may call me a fanatic or whatever they please, but I verily believe that our kind Heavenly Father had much to do in furnishing that cool, wholesome spring of water to those poor, starving men. It was my privilege to fill my quart cup many times at that spring during my great paper asleep, and especially the one he cut open, finding inside a full-grown gray rabbit, with just a little of the fur off. It looks to me that all the fur could have been off that rabbit, and the story would still have been a little hard to swallow, as well as the rabbit. When I compare the common gray rabbit of Indiana with the little ratter that was used to be so numerous in this State, I have to stretch myself a little, as he and his ratter had to do, in order to swallow his story. Well, I shall try and tell a true story, and it is a snake one, too, tho' the snakes were not so large and long as my good comrades' were. In 1861 I and an older brother were doing some grubbing. It was in the Spring of the year. Our little sister came out in the clearing and was playing in one of the holes from which we had taken out a large grub. Presently we heard her say "Snake!" We went who she was, and commenced killing garter snakes, and we kept it up until we had killed 32. Also, in the Summer of 1863, while working on Stillwell Prairie in Laporte County, for Mr. Josiah Wing, I was one day grubbing out some scattering grubs in a meadow (they were burrow grubs, with quite a bed of leaves around them), and in moving these leaves I found and killed seven rattlers in a half day. The rattlers, as near as I can remember, ranged in length from 15 to 24 inches long, with rattles from two to seven in number. With best wishes for the comrades who did not get bit with the six-footer in the canoe.—H. E. Butler, Co. C, 123th Ind., Roanoke, Ind.

## MISSION RIDGE.

A Splendid Description of the Spectacular Assault.

Editor National Tribune: Your issue of Dec. 15, with John McElroy's account of the "Assault on Mission Ridge," is by far the most accurate description of that wonderful spectacular charge that has come to my notice. The author seems to have got his inspiration from a place in the line of those splendid battalions of Baird, Wood, Sheridan and Johnson, who had been engaged chiefly in the "observation" business for almost three days prior to the hour when the six shots from Orchard Knob set them in motion toward Mission Ridge.

B. F. Taylor's description of the advance up the Ridge is a genuine picture of the scenes near the crest of the Ridge, as witnessed by the writer, who was put out of the battle by a rebel bullet, and was not far from midway between the Ridge and Orchard Knob when our men went over the works on the crest of Mission Ridge. John McElroy has, in my opinion, written the most truthful account of those three days' operations, Nov. 23,

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24 and 25, 1863, ever published. Comrades, one and all, who are not subscribers to The National Tribune, send in your dollar, and show your appreciation of the paper that is now publishing true history, without regard to the fear or favor of the field and staff, or of the line or rank and file.—P. A. McNeil, Turchin's Brigade, Baird's Division, Richmond, Ohio.

Thanks from California. Editor National Tribune: The weight given to California's cause in this Japanese trouble by your great paper meets with grateful appreciation on all sides. We are fortunate, indeed, to have such a valuable friend to plead our cause among the Eastern people. I feel proud that you accord such generous space to my communication and the support you give it in the form of an editorial—true, clear and suggestive of the quickest and surest solution of the problem.—H. C. Hall, Corte Madera, Cal.

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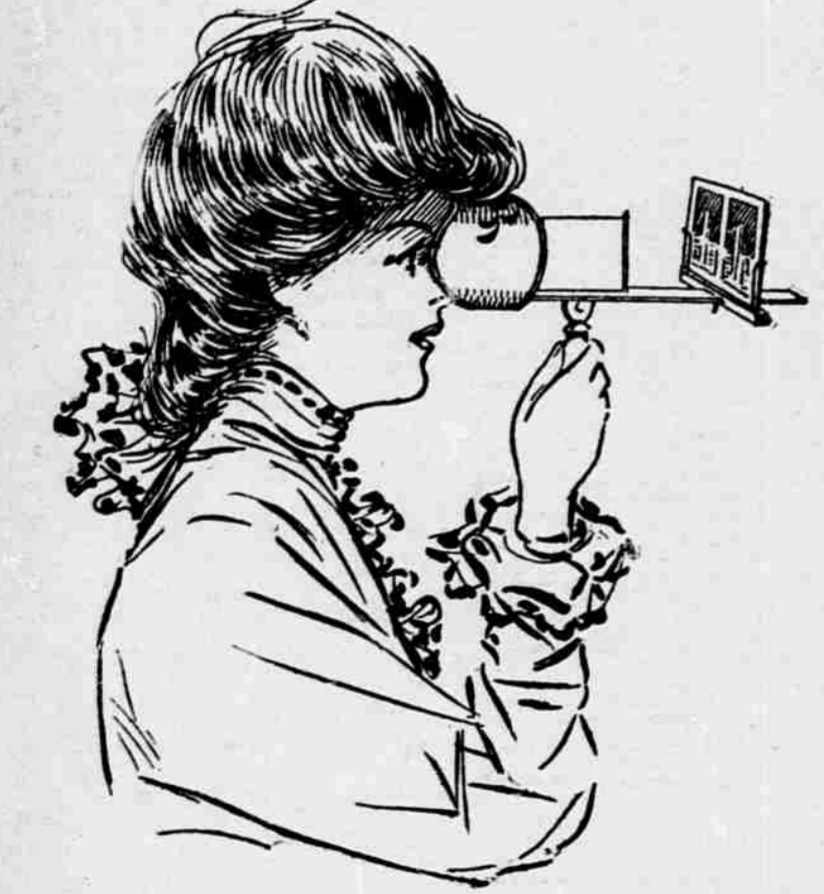
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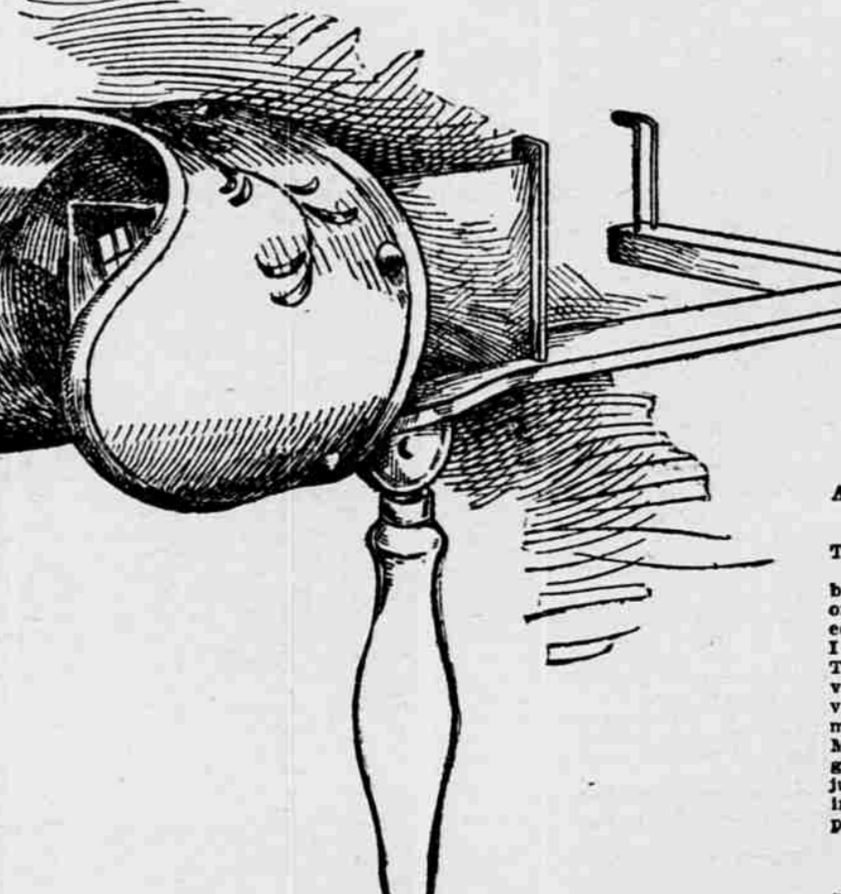
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